Pollution in Sutlej basin

3234. SHRIMATI VIPLOVE THAKUR: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the fact that Sutlej basin has been converted into a dumping ground due to 1000 MW Karcham Wangtoo hydropower project;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the indiscriminate blasting and unchecked air pollution has severely affected the livelihood of the people in the adjoining villages of Kilba, Runang, Urni, Yula, Meeru, Chagoan, Tapri, Sapni and Kanai; and

(d) if so, the action taken/being taken by Government to save environment of the region and the details of steps Government has taken against the said hydropower project company?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) and (b) For the disposal of the excavated material, forty seven sties have been earmarked in the project area. Most of the dumping sites, though located along the river, are at a safe distance. Adequate protection measures are provided in advance before dumping the excavated material.

(c) As reported by this Ministry's Regional Office at Chandigarh, there is no indiscriminate blasting nor is the air pollution is unchecked. Blasting is done in controlled manner using explosives which are duly approved and licensed by Chief Controller of Explosives and the District Administration. It does not appear to be correct that air pollution has severely affected the livelihood of the people in the adjoining villages of Kilba, Runang, Urni, Yula, Meeru, Chagon, Tapi, Sapni and Kanai.

(d) Karcham Wangtoo Hydroelectric project in Himachal Pradesh was accorded Environmental Clearance (EC) on 09.11.2005. In the EC letter a condition had been stipulated that restoration of construction area including dumping site of excavated materials should be ensured by leveling, filling up of burrow pits, landscaping etc. and that the area should be property treated with suitable plantation. These conditions are being implemented by the project proponent.

Decrease in Red Pandas

3235. MS. SUSHILA TIRIYA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a considerable decrease in the population of Red Pandas;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether it is also a fact that a very large amount meant for conservation has not been utilized; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?